

A SURE WAY TO BEAT THE RACES.

It Won the Wild Eyed Man a Quarter, and the Diamond Bearer Was Satisfied.

A red faced man whose clothes might have given rather loud if his diamond shirt stud had been there half a chance stepped up to the ticket in a Third Avenue saloon the other afternoon.

"Anything from the last race yet?" he asked.

The shabby, wild eyed little man who had the tape passed it over to him.

After a hurried glance the man behind the shirt stud threw down the tape with a growl of disgust.

"It's a hard game to beat unless you know how," sympathized the wild eyed man. "There's only one really sure way to get the bulge on the ponies, and there's only one man who knows that one way. Now if I had the backing—"

"Wire tapper, eh?" ventured the red faced man. "Sorry, but I've got an important date to meet a sick engineer over in Jersey City."

The man with the untamed optics looked hurt.

"Come, come. I was only fooling," said the red faced man with a wink at the bartender. "Come over to the table here and tell me all about it. What'll you have?"

"You seem like a man of education and understanding," said the shabby one, doubtfully taking a seat at the table. "And since the fakeness of fortune renders it imperative that I should share my great secret with someone, I don't know that I could do better than confide it to you. I beg pardon?" Oh, whiskey, please.

"As you undoubtedly know," he continued when they had filled their glasses, "there is a difference in time between New York and Chicago of about one hour. That is to say, when it is 6 o'clock here it is only 5 o'clock in Chicago."

"In the same way in San Francisco, which is three times as far west of us as is Chicago, so that there is three hours difference in time. That is, when it is 6 o'clock here it is only 3 o'clock in San Francisco. Do you follow me?"

"The further west we go the greater the difference in time. If we go eight times as far west as San Francisco we naturally gain eight times the hours, or, roughly speaking, a whole day."

"But where is eight times as far west as San Francisco? Why, sir, it's all the way round the world to the west again."

The shabby man paused and drew back to watch the effect.

"In other words," suggested the red faced man, "if you've been 'round the world in the meantime to-day is really yesterday."

"Precisely. But to put it in a more practical way," continued the shabby man in an impressive whisper, "if you send your telegram around the world, westward, you'll get it the day before you write it."

"But what has all this to do with beating the races?" asked the man with the white light district on his shirt front.

"Why, don't you see? Take to-day's list of winners, for example. If I had the money I'd send my telegram to my head, and I had to be forcedly extracted from his trousers."

"Nor did the page's costume tempt me. It was as striped as a tiger's skin, and the monk's robe was eaten with holes."

"Hurry up, there, it is late!" cried my companion, as I stood undecided.

"All that remained for me then was the quilted dress of a Chinaman of rank."

"Give me the dress of a Spanish nobleman of olden times," I said to the man.

"But the old Hidalgo for whom my costume was made must have been a veritable Goliath. I was lost in his garments and as lonely as if I had been in an immense deserted hall."

"Will your Excellency try a bandit's dress?" suggested the owner of the shop, who had a fine hat, and the dagger, too, look.

"A digger? Not such a bad idea! I had doubts as to the propriety of it, but his dress betrayed the fact that he could not have been more than 12 years old. The blood red velvet of the long coat, which I bathed my fevered cheeks. And the mask! Oh, that idiotic physiognomy, where all my tortures during the long night of waiting, I told her of the wild jealousy that made my life a hell."

"Then, with utter abandon, her slender body swayed toward me. Dressed as goddess of the night, the folds of black lace with stars, she was beautiful and mysterious as a dream far away childhood."

"A smile crept about the corners of her red lips, with infinite confidence, she turned her head toward me. 'No, never have I heard such laughter!'"

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The Mandarin's Courtship:

A Story of a Masquerade Ball

From the Russian.

Half past 6. It was the hour she had appointed.

My overcoat flapped wildly about my legs, the plaything of an icy wind whose keen breath I did not feel. I held my head proudly erect and looked at the men who passed by with the protecting glance of a conqueror, while for each woman who crossed my path I felt a sudden thrill of tenderness, a reflection of the wild love that had absorbed me, body and soul, for four days.

At a quarter to 7 I ceased to look at the men about me. I watched only the women, and them with anger. There was only one who could interest me. What did the others matter, save to render the moments of waiting still more unendurable?

At half past 8 I was convinced that she would not come. My overcoat was tightly buttoned then, the collar was turned up, and I felt that my nose was blue. I shivered painfully and my teeth chattered.

At the sight of my dragging step and bowed shoulders the police must have taken me for an old man seeking a night's shelter beneath the doorway.

It was for her sake that I was so cold. Oh, the heartless! But then, perhaps she was ill. Who could tell? And I who wished all the evils of wrath to fall upon her head!

"Eugenie Nicolaevna will be there!" said my comrade, never dreaming that I had waited for her in the cold and the bitter wind from 6 o'clock until half past 8.

"Ah," I replied, with a look of utter indifference.

There was to be a bal masque at the Folozoffs. Usually I hated such things, but to-night I determined to make an exception to my rule.

"Come on, it's Christmas Eve, and all the world is gay," cried my friend persuasively. "Let us be gay, too. Let's disguise ourselves and go to every ball in the city!"

The faces of my fellow students grew bright with anticipated pleasure.

"Good," they all exclaimed.

Our company was presently made larger by the addition of twelve other students, reckless as ourselves, and together we swept like a whirlwind into the shop of a cheap costumer.

I wanted something at once, sad and beautiful, a costume that would reflect and portray the sorrow in my heart.

"Give me the dress of a Spanish nobleman of olden times," I said to the man.

"But the old Hidalgo for whom my costume was made must have been a veritable Goliath. I was lost in his garments and as lonely as if I had been in an immense deserted hall."

"Will your Excellency try a bandit's dress?" suggested the owner of the shop, who had a fine hat, and the dagger, too, look.

"A digger? Not such a bad idea! I had doubts as to the propriety of it, but his dress betrayed the fact that he could not have been more than 12 years old. The blood red velvet of the long coat, which I bathed my fevered cheeks. And the mask! Oh, that idiotic physiognomy, where all my tortures during the long night of waiting, I told her of the wild jealousy that made my life a hell."

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all in their proper places, were like nothing human.

The mask expressed neither sorrow, merriment nor surprise. It gazed forth with a placid calm which instantly provoked a burst of wild laughter. My comrades leaned against the wall, holding their sides.

"Yours will be the best costume there!" they cried.

And when I looked in the glass I, while my heart was ready to break and the tears smarted behind my eyelids, I, too, could not keep from laughing as they had done.

"Remember, we have sworn not to take off our masks under any circumstances!"

"Agreed! Agreed!"

My mask was, indeed, the most original at the ball. Several groups followed me at once, twining me and turning me like a top from one side to another. And when, with threatening gestures, I turned sharply about to escape my tormentors there was a general shout of wild laughter.

The circling crowd kept in my path so that I could not move and at last the constabulary of their folly caught me and laughed and screamed and sang.

How far away that gay world seemed and how lonely I was under my mask!

"It is I," I whispered eagerly.

"She raised her white eyelids slowly. A slight laugh gleamed in her eyes. 'Yes, it is I! Why, did you not come?'"

"She only laughed, laughed slowly. 'What is the matter?' I cried pleadingly. 'Is it really you?' she replied, between two peals of merriment. 'Oh, how funny you are, and how grotesque!'"

My head ached beyond my breast, my whole attitude betrayed real suffering. She watched the dancers whirling by. A crowd of people, a phyllophora in this way. Can you not guess, can you not see beneath this horrible mask the sorrow that fills my heart? Why did you lead me on before I had forgotten my misery?"

She turned toward me, a protest on her lips. But she lifted her eyes to mine, a cruel laugh shone in her eyes. Breathless, her eyes were with tears, her face buried in the lace of her handkerchief, she said weakly:

"Oh, in pity—look at yourself in the mirror!—Heavens, but you are—"

Grinding my teeth in agony, I looked over into the mirror. A face, placid and indifferent, met my gaze, a physiognomy unrecognizably different from mine. I, too, God help me, I, too, laughed loudly!

"Before I had forgotten my misery!" she cried in a voice that trembled with despair and anger.

"No! not you have no right to laugh!" she said, and then she burst into tears. Then, softly, I told her of my love. Never had I been so eloquent, for never had I loved so deeply as that hour. I related all my tortures during the long night of waiting. I told her of the wild jealousy that made my life a hell.

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THE CHAMPION OF THE BOOMERANG CLUB.

Peace Reigning There Now Again After a Somewhat Agitating Episode, Caused by Envy.

The Boomerang Club, as you might infer from its title, is devoted primarily to the fascinating diversion of casting the boomerang. It was a queer thing, indeed, that on a large tract of land which the club owns, at a little distance from the city, there to throw boomerangs.

But, while they got from this sport a whole lot of exercise, it cannot be said that the members have acquired much skill at it. They have saved boomerangs in large numbers all over the adjacent and surrounding territory, but rarely have they come back to a point anywhere near the thrower.

And so the members of the club, naturally, were all the more deeply interested in it. In fact, actually excited—when at last one of their number, who for a long time had been throwing neither better nor worse than the rest, suddenly developed a skill that was nothing less than phenomenal.

This was the engaging Herbert von Sloppington, a young man of considerable means and of agreeable manners, whom everybody liked, and whose success gave, therefore, to everybody doubly great satisfaction.

Everybody was pleased that any member should finally have achieved success in the difficult sport which the club had chosen, and all were glad that this somebody should be the popular young Herbert von Sloppington. But pretty soon a feeling arose that von Sloppington was having too much success; his boomerangs came back every time he threw; and this they couldn't understand.

He had made a wild throw once in a while they wouldn't have thought so much about it; but he never did. No matter in what direction he cast his boomerangs, nor how far he threw them, they each and every one came back with quite unerring certainty; and finally the club got stirred up over it.

Somebody noticed that now there was a new section of it, a thin wrapping of paper, whereas those he had thrown before had been plain. The new section began to have a feeling that something was being done to them. This was mysterious, and finally the whole business became so disturbing that action was taken upon it by the club. Von Sloppington was called upon to explain, and then the whole story came out.

It seems that the young man was engaged in literary pursuits, a fact not generally known in the club, for the simple reason that he had never had anything printed.

He had been devoting himself to authorship for some years, but no matter what he had written, he had sent it to his publisher, and he had always come back empty-handed. At last, in this state of affairs, young von Sloppington had bethought him of trying one of his manuscripts around a boomerang and sending it out in that way. And this without any idea of taking advantage of the club—far from it.

What he had thought was that, as he had never succeeded in getting a boomerang back, perhaps he might in this way get rid of one of his manuscripts. When his paper came in the casting on the day on which he made that first phenomenal throw, and he stood up and launched that boomerang with the thin wrapping of paper around it off into space, smiling inwardly as he did so, he was simply thinking to himself that now at last he was going to get a manuscript accepted somewhere. If it was only by the cross in some distant corner.

But then, a little later, came that astonishing surprise, when to the amazement of the group of clubmen gathered around him at the casting place, and no less to that of young von Sloppington himself, there was observed coming straight toward them one of those things that was unmistakably a boomerang, a boomerang that came directly toward and actually settled at last far from young von Sloppington's feet. And then had come that rejoicing by the club, and it was then that young von Sloppington had his fall.

He had never dreamed that that first boomerang would come back as it did, but from that on until the grand demonstration every boomerang that young Herbert von Sloppington launched at the semi-weekly meetings of the Boomerang Club had tied around it one of his manuscripts. And every one came back!

Now, as you can see, technically, von Sloppington had done nothing wrong. For it was set forth clearly and explicitly in the brief rules of the club governing its members that there was no restriction whatever as to the boomerangs thrown, excepting only as to their length—there should be used no boomerang exceeding six feet in length, measuring along the curve. But that was the only restriction, and von Sloppington's boomerangs were all well within the prescribed measure.

So that technically he was all right; and this was freely conceded. But there was a feeling, nevertheless, that against him in the club, nevertheless, for he was felt that von Sloppington knew, after that first trial, that he was playing a sure thing when he threw a boomerang, and he had tied the manuscript on securely, so that it and the boomerang couldn't get separated, the boomerang must come back, and so he had the whole club at his mercy.

Von Sloppington offered to resign at once, and for a time there was commotion in the club, as to have been the most stylish woman who ever lived in Fort Gibson and occupied the large stone building still standing on Garrison Hill. Many people in the old town remember